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ABSTRACT

The numerous approaches in the teaching of reading can be summarized by discussing logical versus psychological approaches in teaching reading. The teacher is the dominant person in stressing a logical reading curriculum for pupils. The sequence comes from outside of the pupil but is arranged by the professional reading teacher to provide optimal benefit to learners. Distar, programmed reading, outcome based education, and programmed learning are examples of logical reading curricula. Toward the other end of the continuum is a psychological approach, where the pupil needs to be strongly involved in determining objectives, learning activities, and evaluation techniques. Individualized reading and the experience chart approach are examples of the psychological approach. The following guidelines for an optimal reading program are recommended: (1) each pupil begins at a point where he/she is ready to achieve as optimally as possible; (2) the learner experiences continual progress successfully in reading; (3) the four vocabularies--listening, speaking, reading, and writing--are integrated in a quality reading program; (4) major emphasis is placed on reading literature, not analyzing words into components; (5) multimedia approaches are used to motivate pupils so that an inward desire in learning to read is inherent; and (6) learning to read as a lifetime endeavor is stressed. (RS)

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SEQUENCE IN READING INSTRUCTION

There are numerous approaches in the teaching of reading, each stressing certain advantages over the other procedures. These many procedures of teaching reading include use of basal readers, individualized reading, reading recovery, experience chart approaches, whole language procedures, Distar, linguistic methods, phonetic and word analysis techniques, and programmed learning, among others. One may be able to summarize these procedures by discussing logical versus psychological approaches in teaching reading.

A Logical Reading Curriculum

The teacher is the dominant person in stressing a logical reading curriculum for pupils. Thus a teacher may write objectives in measurable terms and arrange these in ascending order of complexity for learner achievement. Learning activities in reading are then aligned with the stated objectives. A pupil either achieves or does not achieve any single objective arranged in a sequential manner. The appraisal procedures are also aligned with the precise, measurably stated objectives. The alignment of the appraisal procedures with the precise objectives emphasizes criterion referenced testing. Validity in instruction is in evidence if the learning activities and the appraisal procedures harmonize with the objectives of reading instruction. Reliability in test results is in evidence if the test scores are consistent with repeated measurements of the same pupil regardless if test- retest, alternative forms, or split- half reliability is used. Numerical data from test results will be in evidence such as percentile scores, quartile deviations, standard deviations, and standard scores.

For a logical sequence method of teaching reading, the teacher may write specific objectives for pupils to achieve such as the following:

1. The pupil will list three traits of the main character in the story (an example form the basal reader).

2. Given three sentences that have been cut apart from the selection read, the pupil will arrange these in proper sequence or order

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(an example from a story in reading recovery; a one to one relationship exists here between a teacher and a pupil).

3. The pupil will respond correctly to five words pronounced correctly when these are pointed out by the teacher of Distar.

4. Given six words which begin with the "m" consonant sound, the pupil will provide an additional three words starting with the same sound (this is an example of a lesson in phonics instruction).

5. For each lesson read in programmed reading, the pupil will respond to questions and blank spaces with eighty per cent accuracy (this example stresses stimulus/ response learning or S- R theory of teaching reading).

For each plan of reading given as examples above, the teacher arranges sequential learning for pupils. The sequence comes form outside of the pupil but is arranged to aid optimal benefit to learners by the professional reading teacher. Distar is highly structured and ideally the teacher follows the manual religiously to guide pupil progress. Programmed reading is also highly structured in that the programmer arranges sequence for pupils in each carefully ordered step of learning so that for each stimulus there is an ordered response given by the pupil. Distar and programmed reading require precise, exact answers for each sequential step of learning.

Those advocating a structured plan of teaching reading, whereby the teacher is highly instrumental in determining sequence for pupils, believe in the following philosophy of instruction:

1. teachers have had much education and training in teaching reading and thereby should be in the best position to determine sequence in pupil learning.

2. relevant objectives are selected by teachers when they are arranged in ascending order of complexity.

3. flexibility in teaching plans are made when pupils need a changed sequence from that originally planned by the reading teacher.

4. the reading teacher evaluates to notice which sequence should be followed in teaching when modifying that which was planned initially.

5. historically in the teaching of reading, a teacher determined curriculum has been in evidence.

With a teacher determined reading curriculum, the teacher may announce prior to instruction which objectives pupils are to achieve as a result of instruction. Learners then might know what is expected of them, guess work is not involved with predetermined measurably stated objectives. After instruction, the teacher measures if pupils have/ have not attained goals of teaching reading. The reading teacher here is at the center of decision making. Ediger (1995) wrote the following on outcomes based education and its relative behaviorally stated objectives:

Outcomes based education lists and states the following advantages for their advocated beliefs:

1. verifiable, objective results are available to demonstrate whether students are achieving at an adequate level.
2. teachers need to select learning activities aligning with the predetermined behaviorally stated objectives. The teacher needs pedagogy skills to choose activities so that students may achieve objectives. Teachers are responsible for learner progress.
3. Inputs such as teachers with high levels of college/university education, money spent on students for schooling, among others, are not relevant. Only the ends of instruction are salient.

Disadvantages given for outcomes based education include the following:

1. parents, the lay public, and students themselves are not accountable for the latters achievement in school.
2. money spent on education is greatly slighted, since only student achievement is emphasized. Money spent on inputs such as bonus income for teacher's salaries, increased amount of teaching materials, and more building repairs may be deemed unnecessary in a strict outcomes based system of instruction.
3. school curricula become stultified with predetermined objectives be they state mandated or district determined instructional management systems.

Each plan of reading instruction has advantages and disadvantages. Precise predetermined objectives for pupils to achieve are one approach in assisting learners to achieve sequentially in the

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reading curriculum. Pertaining to the setting of standards (objectives) for pupils to achieve, Berliner and Biddle wrote:

> Some critics from industry and government claim that the way to improve schools and prepare our students for jobs of the next century is through better, clearer, tougher (but achievable) standards in basic subjects. Somehow, this seems particularly reasonable when it comes to subjects Americans seem to worry about most...
>
> Promulgated along with tough content standards are demands for high performance standards. In this way American parents and educators will understand what standards their children should know and be able to do at different ages and at what level of skill they should be doing it. These high content and performance standards ...are intended to ensure our students are employable, that our industry will succeed.
>
> At least two things are left out of this analysis: the nature of the jobs of the future and making certain that students actually have opportunities to learn those standards. These are crucial issues.

Programmed learning truly stresses a logical sequence in its following of stimulus- response school of thought in terms of how pupils learn to read. Ediger (1988) wrote the following criteria for programmed learning:

1. Programmers determine what pupils are to learn, using microcomputers or textbooks.
2. Pupils progress forward very slowly at each sequential step of learning.
3. Learners know immediately if their response to an item is correct or incorrect.
4. Reinforcement is inherent in programmed learning. Thus, pupils basically are correct in each sequential step of learning.

Standard setting may be translated into the writing of precise objectives of instruction. Thus, according to Ediger (1988), behaviorally stated objectives follow these criteria:

1. Specificity is important in the writing of stated objectives.
2. It must be possible to measure pupil achievement after instruction, to determine if the desired ends have been achieved.
3. Learning activities are selected in terms of having pupils achieve the desired objectives.

4. The objectives are stated in terms off what pupils will be learning.

A Pupil Centered Reading Curriculum

Toward the other end of the continuum, away from the logical reading curriculum, is a psychological approach. Here, the pupil needs to be strongly involved in determining objectives, learning activities, and evaluation techniques to ascertian progress. A psychological reading curriculum is then in evidence. Teacher/ pupil planning of objectives, learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures is at the heart of a pupil centered curriculum in reading. Humanism as a psychology of learning is then being emphasized. A humane reading program, according to its advocates, stresses the individual learner being involved in decision making in the reading curriculum. The pupil is at the center of developing the curriculum area of reading. Ediger (1996) wrote the following:

One approach in emphasizing sequences is to have students choose the order of experiences within a flexible environment. Thus, for example, in individualized reading, a learner selects which library books to read sequentially. After reading a book, the pupil has a conference with the teacher to appraise progress. After the completion of each conference with the teacher, the learner is ready to select the next library book to read. The teacher intervenes in library book selection if the student is unable to choose and complete the reading of a book.

In situations involving individualized reading, the pupil orders his/her own experiences. Sequence, it is felt, resides within the involved learner. Others, the teacher included, cannot select the order of goals for a learner to attain. The student in individualized reading must do the processing of content. A teacher determined reading curriculum does not work, according to advocates of individualized reading. Humanism as a psychology of learning, strongly advocates concepts such as the following:

1. student- teacher planning of the curriculum.
2. learners choosing from among diverse objectives which to achieve and which to omit.
3. learning centers from which pupils may select their learning opportunities.
4. students being involved in determining objectives within a

contract system.

Individualized reading is strong on emphasizing the interests of pupils in its implementation. There needs to be a considerable number of trade books in a quality individualized reading curriculum. The trade books need to be on diverse topics and titles as well as on different reading levels. With different topics and titles, pupils may choose a book to read that is personally interesting and has perceived purpose. The trade books, too, need to be on different achievement levels in reading so that the slow, average, and fast readers may choose reading materials to read that are on their achievement level, not the frustration nor the too easy level of reading in which boredom sets in on the part of the pupil. After the pupil (or small group with multiple copies of a paperback) has completed reading a trade book, he/ she may have a conference with the teacher. Content in the book should be discussed with both the teacher and the pupil being actively involved in raising questions and probing for information. The conference should stimulate further interest in reading. The learner may read a chosen selection orally to the teacher so that word recognition progress may be noticed. The teacher briefly should record salient factors from the conference. Comparisons may then be made of later with earlier conferences of a pupil in individualized reading.

In the summary above of individualized reading, there are selected salient features. These include pupils (a) having chosen the trade book for reading, (b) being actively involved in the conference in raising questions and responding with answers, (c) selecting what is to be read orally to the teacher, (d) indicating what he/she will be working on specifically for the next conference, and (e) showing leadership and decision making skills.

The psychology of humanism is involved when pupils assist in selecting objectives such as choosing their very own sequential trade books to read. Inherent in this selection are the ordered books selected to be read with the pupil choosing the sequence to be followed. Evaluation procedures emphasize that the pupil be a key player in

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appraising compression and oral reading skills. Pupil/ teacher planning is involved in evaluating the progress of the former. Tiedt (1983) listed the following advantages for pupils in using individualized reading in th curriculum:

1. Wide range of library materials and free selection are possible.
2. Broader range of reading subjects is achieved.
3. Learning experiences are extended.
4. Reading skills are taught through small group approaches.
5. Evaluation includes personal conferences.
6. Stress is put on individual development to fullest possible.
7. The gifted student is stimulated.

From the above named advantages, standards 1, 5, and 6, in particular, stress humanism as a psychology of learning. Thus free selection of reading materials by pupils, personal conferences in a one to one relationship with the teacher, and individual development of learners are salient when thinking of individuals developing decision making skills and sequencing their very own achievement. Standard number 4 brings in a very significant item in learning and that is to work harmoniously with others in small group settings.

The experience chart approach may work in much of the same manner. First, early primary grade learners in class have a concrete, meaningful experience such as looking at a set of objects on an interest center. Next, the pupils present ideas to the teacher on what was observed; the ideas are recorded on the chalkboard or on a monitor with computer use. Pupils present the content while the teacher records. Pupils with teacher guidance read the content as the teacher points to words and phrases that were presented by learners.

In the above example, learners gave the content sequentially for the experience chart which the teacher then recorded. Later on, pupils need to write up their very own experiences. Proper sequence is important. Writing up personal experiences is something done throughout one's lifetime. Very often, adults write their own experiences in a diary or friendly letter. These also may be called experience charts.

Pertaining to experience charts, Ediger (1986) wrote the

following:

Early primary grade pupils can have interesting, realistic experiences through the taking of excursions with teacher leadership. Depending upon the unit being taught, an excursion can be taken to a farm, dairy, fire station, zoo, or museum. After the excursion has been completed, pupils may present ideas to the teacher about their experiences. The teacher writes ideas given by learners on the chalkboard using neat manuscript letters large enough for all to see. The recorded experience may be four to ten lines in length depending upon the developmental level of the child. Pictures may be drawn or collected and placed above the recorded written experience. Pupils with teacher aid could read individually or collectively what has been written. In this learning activity, pupils had a lifelike experience which was the field trip. The experience was recorded. Pupils then engaged in reading what had been written. Thus, early primary grade pupils were reading content...

Too frequently, it is assumed that experience charts ...would be used only with early primary grade pupils in reading readiness programs. Throughout the elementary school years, pupils can develop experience charts. Once a pupil has developed his/ her own writing vocabulary so that ideas can be expressed effectively on paper, the involved learners should develop their own experience charts. For example, intermediate grade pupils having visited an assembly line can record their own experiences in writing. This learning activity should not be used excessively; it should be used along with other experiences. Excursions are not the only basis for writing experience charts.

Additional learning activities which might well provide ideas to pupils for an experience chart include viewing video-tapes, slides, films, filmstrips, computer programs, world wide web and internet, as well as fax messages. These background experiences need to be interesting, meaningful, and possessing perceived purpose. Sequence resides within the pupil when experience charts are developed by pupils with teacher guidance.

Combs, et. al. wrote the following pertaining to perceptual psychology, also called humanism:

Perceptual psychology presents us with an essentially hopeful view of persons. For several generations we have lived with a conception of persons as almost exclusively the products of forces exerted upon them, prisoners of the past. In such a view the responsibility of human beings lies always outside themselves and human potentiality lies largely at the mercy of forces over which an individual has little or no control. If human

behavior is exclusively the product of the stimuli, then no one can ever be held responsible for his behavior and the solution to our great problems must be placed in the hands of some great mind who knows where the people should go and a cadre of assistants skilled in manipulation to make sure they get there.

The perceptual view of persons is far more hopeful. It sees the dynamics of human behavior as inside a person and each human being therefore, in far greater measure the architect of his own experience. If behavior is the product of perception, limits of human potentiality are restricted only by the richness, extent, and availability of perceptions in a person's personal field of meaning. The eventual possibilities for human beings in such a view of human potential are beyond comprehension. Motivated by a basic need for self actualization we can also be assured the expression of such potential will be in positive directions if we can find the means to set it free.

In the direct quote above, Dr. Combs is very strong in the areas of pupils choosing and selecting goals, learning opportunities, and evaluation procedures. Individuals are active, not passive beings. Inside each human being there are forces which make for self direction of human behavior. With richness in learning opportunities, the pupil develops selected perceptions and acts upon what was perceived. The pupil then is the actor and is not what is acted upon to make for human behavior.

Important implications for the teaching of reading are the following:

1. pupils actively seek their very own reading materials.
2. they seek sequential trade books to read.
3. the learner orders or sequences ideas gleaned from reading.
4. meaning is developed by the involved learner.
5. questions to discuss from content read come from pupils as they determine relevancy of ideas.

In Conclusion

Who can do the best job of sequencing reading experiences for pupils? Might a logical approach be best in which teachers or other educators order experiences for pupils? Toward the other end of the continuum, pupils may sequence their own experiences when selecting and reading their own materials of instruction with teacher guidance.

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Perhaps, this is a matter which needs to be resolved in terms of what procedure would help the individual pupil to do the best possible in reading instruction.

The following guidelines might well make for the best reading program possible for pupils, if implemented:

1. Each pupil begins at a point where he/she ready to achieve as optimally as possible.

2. The learner experiences continual progress successfully in reading.

3. The four vocabularies —listening, speaking, reading, and writing— are integrated in a quality reading program.

4. Word recognition skills, such as phonics, syllabication, context clues, and structural analysis, are taught within a framework of interesting content to be read.

5. Major emphasis is placed upon reading literature, not analyzing words into component parts.

6. Multimedia approaches are used to motivate pupils so that an inward desire in learning to read is inherent.

7. Problem solving, critical and creative thinking, as well as application are salient concepts stressed in teaching reading.

8. The best sequence is used to guide each pupil toward optimum achievement in reading.

9. Learning to read as a life time endeavor is stressed.

10. The use of relevant research results is important in the teaching of reading.

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